

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EPAE-00 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00
SOE-02 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 INR-10 IO-14 L-03
NSF-02 NSC-05 NSAE-00 PM-05 ICA-20 OES-09 SS-15
SP-02 DOE-15 INT-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 PA-02 /137 W
-----027860 010603Z /15

R 312300Z JUL 78

FM AMCONSUL VANCOUVER

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4416

UNCLAS VANCOUVER 0981

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SENV, ENRG, PBOR

SUBJECT: HIGH ROSS DAM DAMNED

1. BRITISH COLUMBIA MEDIA AND OFFICIALDOM REACTED QUICKLY AND NEGATIVELY TO THE RECENT FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION GO-AHEAD FOR THE HIGH ROSS DAM PROJECT LONG DESIRED BY SEATTLE. (THE PROJECT ENTAILS RAISING AN EXISTING DAM TO INCREASE ITS POWER POTENTIAL, BUT IN THE PROCESS FLOODING SOME 5000 ACRES OF THE SKAGIT VALLEY IN B.C.)

2. A FRONT PAGE-WIDE HEADLINE IN THE VANCOUVER SUN DATED JULY 28 WARNED "SEATTLE GETS RIGHT TO FLOOD SKAGIT - CANADIANS PLAN TO FIGHT DROWNING OF B.C. VALLEY," WHILE A SUN EDITORIAL ON JULY 29 WAS TITLED "THE DAM THAT CAN'T BE." B.C. PREMIER BENNETT AND ENVIRONMENT MINISTER NIELSEN WERE QUOTED AS DENYING THAT THE MATTER IS SETTLED. NIELSEN WARNED THAT RAISING THE DAM WOULD BE A "SERIOUS ADVENTURE" AND SAID THAT "POLITICAL PERSUASION WILL CONTINUE TO BE PURSUED ALONG WITH NEGOTIATIONS...BETWEEN B.C. AND SEATTLE." BENNETT ADDED THAT "AS FAR AS I AM CONCERNED, THE MATTER IS STILL UNDER DISCUSSION." STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS WERE LESS DIPLOMATIC. REPRESENTATIVES OF ROSS COMMITTEE ASSERTED THAT THE ISSUE WOULD BE PURSUED ALL THE WAY TO THE U.S. SUPREME COURT IF NECESSARY.

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3. IN FAIRNESS, IT MUST BE NOTED THAT PRESS REPORTS HAVE INCLUDED REFERENCES TO THE FACT THAT THE 1967 COMPENSATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN B.C. AND SEATTLE (A "BONEHEAD DECISION" - THE SUN) DOES IN EFFECT GIVE SEATTLE CITY LIGHT B.C. S APPROVAL TO UNDERTAKE THE PROJECT IN RETURN FOR ANNUAL PAYMENTS OF SOME DOLS 34,000 PER YEAR. CONCERNING THE LONGSTANDING NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN B.C.

AND SEATTLE TO TRY TO FIND AN ALTERNATIVE TO RAISING THE DAM,
EVERYONE SEEMS TO RECOGNIZE THAT THE BALL IS CURRENTLY IN B.C. S
COURT. HOWEVER, THERE ARE PENSIVE REFERENCES TO THE OBVIOUS FACT
THAT SEATTLE S HAND IS CONSIDERABLY STRONGER NOW, FOLLOWING THE
FERC RULING.

4. CLIPPINGS BEING POUCHED TO OTTAWA AND EUR/CAN.
LUPPI

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DISPUTES, CONSTRUCTION, PRESS COMMENTS, DAMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978VANCOU00981
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780314-0070
Format: TEL
From: VANCOUVER
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978071/aaaaabbb.tel
Line Count: 70
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d930c06a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1843254
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HIGH ROSS DAM DAMNED
TAGS: SENV, ENRG, PBOR, US, CA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d930c06a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014